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IS SAME SEX SIBLING AVOIDANCE OR JOKING?

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ABSTRACT This paper will reconsider the avoidance and joking distinction among the Glui people, focusing on the interpretation of same sex sibling relationships. By examining their expected behaviours in physical contact, verbal expressions, and exchanging gifts, this paper will show that their behavioural restrictions are milder than those for opposite sex siblings, but are similar to those for same sex parent-child relationships. Consequently, this paper will argue that the same sex sibling relationship and same sex parent-child relationship should both be interpreted as avoidance/respect, and not, as regarded in the literature, as joking and avoidance, respectively.

Key Words: Glui; Avoidance; Joking; Same-sex sibling.

1. INTRODUCTION

Avoidance and joking relationships are institutionalised contrastive behavioural codes or restrictions associated with kin classification, found in kin-based societies around the world (Mauss, 1928; Radcliff-Brown, 1940, etc.). With this dichotomy, an individual has to refrain from some physical and verbal behaviours with avoidance kin, whereas with joking kin, a similar series of behaviours are not only tolerated but accepted or appreciated, or are sometimes regarded as obligatory. The restrictions are often related to marriageability or sexual accessibility, and affect not only having physical contact and developing sexual relationships but also exchanging jokes on sexual topics.

Khoisan peoples have also been reported to practice institutionalised contrastive behaviours, which are well represented in ethnography (e.g., Engelbrecht (1936) for Korana (a.k.a. !Ora), Marshall (1976) and Lee (2003: 66–69) for Northern Ju (a.k.a. !Kung)). There they are described as being similar in minimizing contact with avoidance relatives, both physically and verbally. Avoided behaviours also include indirect contact such as having eye contact and entering each other's huts. With joking relatives, contrastively, people are relaxed and behave without reservation. They can exchange obscene jokes and tease each other by mentioning their physical features. Such behaviours would be taken as a serious personal attack and insult when directed toward an avoidance partner, but with a joking partner they are taken humorously as a means of expressing solidarity and personal interest so as to get closer to the other party.

As a result of a comparison of Khoisan kinship available at the time, Barnard (1992) concluded that the distinction of avoidance and joking was a 'deeper' feature than the widely observed distinctions such as lineal/collateral or cross/parallel in Khoisan kin classification, because the former was found in all the Khoisan

kinships whereas the latter were not. In his view, all kin categories are divided into either avoidance kin or joking kin, without having a neutral category. This dichotomy, coupled with the universal kin categorization in the case of hunter-gatherers, can extend to non-kin, incorporating newcomers and potential partners into their kin-based social networks through various means.

For the Glui people, Silberbauer (1981: 143) gave the following substantial description to characterize proper avoidance behavior, other than refraining from developing a sexual relationship, with additional mention that there exists a gradation among behaviour:

- Not sitting close together, and generally avoiding bodily contact if not of the same sex.
- Being careful not to swear or make bawdy remarks in the obvious hearing of those in an avoidance relationship.
- Not touching possessions without permission; if an object is to be passed between avoidance relatives, an intermediary should, properly, be used and a direct transfer avoided.
- Younger persons use the honorific plural form when addressing their elders.

Silberbauer showed how the kin categories are divided into avoidance or joking in his interpretation of Glui kinship as a bifurcate merging type. However, about 35 years after his pioneering investigation in the 1950s and 1960s, I started my field research with Glui people in the 1990s and found that their kinship system includes an anomalous classification that does not fit well in the bifurcate merging type classification. What causes the difference is the use of a seniority distinction among siblings (cf. Ono, 2010, etc.). That is, although the Glui distinguish cross cousins from parallel cousins and categorize parallel cousins together with siblings, parental same sex siblings are distinguished according to whether they are elder or younger. Parental same sex younger siblings are categorized together with ego's own parents, and parental same sex elder siblings together with parental opposite sex siblings. On this point, the Glui system is distinct from the other Khoe systems whose main structure of G-1, G0, and G+1 is bifurcate merging. As a corollary, children of ego's same sex elder siblings are categorized as ego's children whereas children of ego's same sex younger siblings are categorized as niece/nephew.

Table 1 below shows the kintypes each kin category covers. The anomalously classified kintype is underlined. Glui has six basic consanguineous kin categories, namely grandrelative (senior and junior), parent, sibling, cross cousin, and child, which are all classificatory. The grandrelative is a category covering kin of more than one generation apart and kin of an adjacent generation who are not parent or child, such as grandparent, grandchild, uncle, aunt, niece, and nephew. Grandrelatives belonging to ascending generations are senior grandrelatives, and the other grandrelatives belonging to descending generations are junior grandrelatives.

Table 1. Glui kin categories

| Glui kin category | Glui term | kintype |
|----------------------|-----------|--------------------------------|
| Senior grandrelative | cālū | PP, PosG, PsseG, PPP*... |
| Parent | lūū(-lúa) | P, PssyG, cross cousin of P... |
| Sibling | òò | G, PssGC |
| Cross cousin | g#ùā-ʔó | PosGC |
| Child | lúā | C, sseGC, C of cross cousins |
| Junior grandrelative | ŋlòòri | CC, osGC, ssyGC, CCC... |

P: parent, C: child, ss: same sex, os: opposite sex, G: sibling, e: elder, y: younger.

* In Silberbauer's description, PPP are labeled the same as P, and CCC are labeled the same as C, which I have not attested.

These kin categories form four types of dyadic relationships, namely, senior grandrelative to junior grandrelative (abbreviated as GG), parent to child (PC), sibling to sibling (SIB), and cross cousin to cross cousin (XC).

Parent, child, and opposite sex sibling are always avoidance throughout Khoisan kinships, (in fact they are nearly universally definitive of incest), and so the classificatory categories including them as a kernel member are avoidance as well. Silberbauer interpreted the other kin categories, namely grandrelatives, cross cousins, and same sex siblings, as joking. This pattern is widely practiced among other Khoe systems and subsequent researchers such as Tanaka (1980) and Sugawara accepted and shared his model, too.

In this paper, however, I would like to question whether the same-sex SIB relationship should be interpreted as joking. Table 2 below shows Silberbauer's model of avoidance/joking distribution with the above mentioned four dyadic relationships and the category of affine, *lʔui*, which is avoidance. The questioned same sex SIB relationship is shown in a square.

Table 2. The Silberbauer model of avoidance and joking distribution with Glui kin categories

| Relationships | | Silberbauer model |
|---------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|
| Parent-child (PC) | | Avoidance |
| Siblings (SIB) | -between opposite sexes | Avoidance |
| | -between same sexes | Joking |
| Cross cousins (XC) | | Joking |
| Grandrelatives (GG) | | Joking |
| Affines | | Avoidance |

The next section will discuss the difficulty of determining the nature of the same sex sibling relationship mainly due to its lower saliency and the lack of any single determining criterion.

2. SAME SEX SIBLING RELATIONSHIP

There is a tendency for investigations on avoidance and joking dichotomy to concentrate on opposite sex relationships, adjacent generational relationships, and affinal relationships. This is because, firstly, the dichotomy is often related to the license of sexual accessibility, and restrictions on sexual behaviour, direct and indirect, tend to be stricter between opposite sexes. Secondly, there often exist tensions between adjacent generational relationships and affinal relationships. The latter in particular catches the interest of researchers because of the implicit or explicit tension between the two parties connected by a marriage. On the other hand, other types of relationships, such as same sex, same generation, and consanguineous relationships are less eye-catching in the arena of avoidance and joking dichotomy.⁽¹⁾ The same sex SIB relationship and same sex XC relationship belong to this group in the Glui system, and both of them have been considered as joking, as with those of other Khoe kinships such as Naro (Barnard, 1976, 1992).

What led the researchers to interpret the same sex SIB relationship as belonging to the joking category is direct observation of the people's behaviour. It is visible that same sex siblings are physically close, in particular sisters, and that can lead us to the conclusion that they have joking relationships, if avoidance is associated with physical distance.

However, this image of joking based on observations of direct contact and proximity can be misleading, since there is a general tendency of physical separation according to sex among Glui. Silberbauer himself added a provisory clause, "if not of same sex," avoidance kin keep distance⁽²⁾ (ibid: 143). Marshall (1976) points out, for North Jul'hoan, that opposite sexes keep more distance than same sexes, and a similar tendency holds true with the Glui people. It is visible even with young children before puberty, who are allowed not to observe the behavioural code according to the dichotomy. Boys and girls tend to play separately, and sit separately in group. In particular, Glui female relatives are close together to help each other doing household tasks and child rearing. They go gathering firewood and food together. This visual image of close co-presence will not square with the avoidance relationship if the "avoidance" means minimizing any physical contact.

In his laborious work, Sugawara (1990) proves that this impression shared by the researchers holds true among Glui and Glana peoples, by actually measuring approximates among individuals and analysing them in terms of sex, age, and kin relation. He concluded that physical contact was more common among females than males. Mothers and daughters tend to keep physically closer than fathers and sons; sisters remain closer than brothers. Opposite sex pairs of siblings and parent-child are more distant. This fact matches well with the impression the researchers had, such as "sisters are helping each other on a daily basis."

With these facts, we need to bear in mind that the physical separation according to sex forms the base structure or undertone of Glui society and the different codes of behaviour in terms of avoidance and joking dichotomy are overlaid on it. This means the behaviour between opposite sex pairs would become highly

accented, irrespective of avoidance or joking, since avoidance behaviour makes the pair further distant and joking behaviour makes the pair close when otherwise they should be distant. This exaggeration continues until such time as people retire from productive age (for females after menopause and males after giving up hunting large-sized game) when some restrictions, such as food taboo and direct addressing of avoidance partners, are relaxed. On the other hand, the behaviour of same sex pairs is hard to distinguish whether they are avoidance or joking, since they are allowed and expected to be close and the restriction would become milder than that for opposite sex pairs.

Another complication in determining whether the same-sex SIB relationship is avoidance or joking is that there seem to be no devoted terms for the dichotomy. Although Silberbauer provides Glui terms for avoidance and joking, I could not verify any of them. Silberbauer (1981: 143) gives the following terms in Glui:

- (a) *giukxekxu*, for 'avoidance/respect relationship.'
- (b) *‡ao*, for 'to be reserved or respectful toward, to be scared of'
to describe attitudes toward avoidance partners.
- (c) *‡ao tama* (a negated form of *‡ao*), for joking partner.

The term (a), *giukxekxu* can be analysed as *giu-kx'ai-ku* 'to *giu*-too_much-each other,' but there is no good candidate found for the probable root, *giu*.⁽³⁾ The meaning of the term (b), *‡ao* (or *!ao*),⁽⁴⁾ fits well with *bee* [*bèe*] in Glui, but *bee* is not a devoted term for avoidance relationships; it is a general term used for 'be afraid of, be distant from,' due to respect or personal disliking, such as dangerous animals, bad weather, specific individuals, subjects at school, etc. In interviews Glui speakers often use a Tswana word *tlotla* 'respect,' as well as *bee*, in order to explain their feelings and attitudes toward avoidance kin, but *tlotla* also means general respect as well. It is not possible, therefore, to rely solely on these terms in telling avoidance kin from joking kin.

There are no devoted terms for a joking relationship, either. Some other Khoe do have such a term, for example Naro has *lgai* for joking relationships (Barnard 1976, 1992). Glui, however, although having the same morpheme, uses *glai*- only in a compound *glai-qx'ari* [*glàt-qx'ārī*], meaning 'to banter/joke with someone' (possibly in a rough and rude manner). This compound is an action verb and not used to specify the attribute of a relationship.

In short, the avoidance or joking categories themselves are not termed in Glui, and people do not call each other such as 'my avoidance' or 'my joking,'⁽⁵⁾ differing from a society where the dichotomy is explicitly termed, such as *utani* relationship in Tanganika (now Tanzania) (Moreau, 1944).

With all the difficulties we have seen, it is clear that for a solution to work it must open up our analysis to a larger field of observable aspects. To determine whether the same-sex SIB relationship is avoidance or joking, this paper proposes a working procedure that compares expected behaviours with those of other same sex relationships. If the expected behaviours are close to those of same-sex PC relationships, then the same-sex SIB relationships should be avoidance; and if they are close to those of same-sex XC or GG relationships, then they should

be joking.

For example, people in joking relationships can do *glai-qx'ari*, and if reciprocal they *glai-qx'ari-ku*; and it seems to be true that they *glai-qx'ari* only with their joking partners, because they enjoy *glai-qx'ari* saliently with cross cousins, and not with parents and opposite sex siblings. When I asked them the question whether or not one can *glai-qx'ari* with same sex siblings, their answers were often phrased as “when young, one can *glai-qx'ari* with his/her same sex sibling, but once grown up, he/she gives up and won't do it.” In a similar vein, they also say that they would play with their young classificatory children as *glai-qx'ari* if the children like to, but it is given up once they grow up and have come to know their behavioural code towards classificatory parents. On this point, the categories of same-sex PC relationship and same-sex SIB relationship are closest to each other.

Restrictions on sexual behaviors are not straightforward with same sex pairs, either, except for verbal behaviors, since homosexuality is very much uncommon among Glui. Instead of developing a sexual relationship, sharing a partner with kin of the same sex can be taken into consideration. Contrastively, it is OK to share a sexual partner with same sex grandrelatives and cross cousins, while it is not accepted with same sex parent and siblings. With same sex siblings, sharing a spouse is fine, as long as the elder sibling gets married first, but sharing an extra-marital lover is not tolerated, including the case of spouse exchange. In this way, the restrictions on developing sexual relationships directly and indirectly, or on the order in initiating a relationship, show the range of potential partners to same sex siblings, too.

To summarize, same-sex SIB relationships are less salient within the avoidance and joking dichotomy, and there does not seem to be any single determining criterion to tell whether they are avoidance or joking in Glui. There are no devoted terms for the dichotomy, and the extent of having physical contact and of keeping distance is more a matter of sexual separation, and does not indicate the nature of the relationship. Still, whether or not they can *glai-qx'ari* and share a sexual partner shows a kind of contrast between GG/XC and SIB/PC. The rest of this paper will, therefore, further examine the expected behaviours among same-sex SIB relationships in order to show to which relationships, viz. same-sex XC/GG or same-sex PC, they are closer.

3. HONORIFIC PLURAL: DISTINGUISHING AVOIDANCE BEHAVIOUR FROM GENERAL RESPECTFUL BEHAVIOUR

Behaving in a polite manner can be motivated either by general respect or by avoidance behaviour, or both. In order to consider the dichotomy, it is necessary to distinguish general reserved behaviours from avoidance behaviours. Usage of address terms in Glui is an example where two separate forms for each purpose exist and they can be combined.

For the former purpose, to express general respect to the referent or to make the speech style polite, Glui people use teknonymy, that is, using the name of

one's first born child in order to address him/her. This form can be used toward anybody who has become a parent, irrespective of the nature of relationship between addresser and addressee, except for one's own parent. Even a married couple, who are definitely in a joking relationship, may address each other using teknonymy, as the father and the mother of their first born child.

Another polite way of addressing is using plural forms for individuals. This is what Silberbauer (1981) termed "honorific plural." Ono (2001) studied the usage of this grammatically irregular plural form in addressing, and found that it is used only between opposite-sex PC and SIB relationships, in addition to between affines where it is used regardless of sex. Such plural forms are used most often between affines, then opposite-sex SIB, and least among opposite-sex PC. The

Table 3. The distribution of the types of relationships

| interviewee | same-sex | | | | opposite-sex | | | | affine | un-known | sum |
|-------------|----------|-----|-----|----|--------------|-----|-----|----|--------|----------|-----|
| sex-name | PC | SIB | GG | XC | PC | SIB | GG | XC | | | |
| m-1 | 5 | 9 | 10 | 2 | 11 | 8 | 5 | 4 | 5 | | 59 |
| m-2 | 12 | 4 | 8 | | 5 | 7 | 11 | 4 | 8 | | 59 |
| m-3 | 5 | 7 | 8 | 6 | 7 | 5 | 10 | 7 | 3 | 1 | 59 |
| m-4 | 10 | 4 | 6 | 10 | 6 | 3 | 9 | 10 | 1 | | 59 |
| m-5 | 10 | 1 | 16 | 1 | 6 | 3 | 14 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 59 |
| m-6 | 6 | | 19 | | 4 | 1 | 18 | 3 | 5 | 3 | 59 |
| f-1 | 5 | 4 | 16 | 2 | 4 | 6 | 17 | 3 | 2 | | 59 |
| f-2 | 6 | 3 | 7 | 3 | 2 | 7 | 12 | 9 | 9 | 1 | 59 |
| f-3 | 7 | 7 | 8 | | 7 | 10 | 7 | 1 | 11 | 1 | 59 |
| f-4 | 5 | 1 | 14 | 2 | 7 | 1 | 19 | 3 | 7 | | 59 |
| f-5 | 4 | 6 | 16 | 2 | 5 | 2 | 20 | 4 | | | 59 |
| f-6 | 8 | 4 | 15 | | 4 | 3 | 22 | 2 | | 1 | 59 |
| sum | 83 | 50 | 143 | 28 | 68 | 56 | 164 | 53 | 55 | 8 | 708 |

Table 4. Numbers of times the honorific plural are used

| interviewee | same-sex | | | | opposite-sex | | | | affine | un-known | sum |
|-------------|----------|-----|----|----|--------------|-------|----|----|--------|----------|-----|
| sex-name | PC | SIB | GG | XC | PC | SIB | GG | XC | | | |
| m-1 | | | | | | 8/8 | | | 5/5 | | 13 |
| m-2 | | | | | 1/5 | 7/7 | | | 8/8 | | 16 |
| m-3 | | | | | 3/7 | 4/5 | | | 1/3 | | 8 |
| m-4 | | | | | 2/6 | 3/3 | | | 1/1 | | 6 |
| m-5 | | | | | | 2/3 | | | 4/4 | | 6 |
| m-6 | | | | | 1/4 | 1/1 | | | 5/5 | | 7 |
| f-1 | | | | | | 1/6 | | | 2/2 | | 3 |
| f-2 | | | | | 2/2 | 5/7 | | | 9/9 | | 16 |
| f-3 | | | | | 3/7 | 9/10 | | | 11/11 | | 23 |
| f-4 | | | | | | 1/1 | | | 7/7 | | 8 |
| f-5 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| f-6 | | | | | | 3/3 | | | | | 3 |
| total | | | | | 12/68 | 44/56 | | | 53/55 | | 109 |

m: male, f: female, PC: parent-child relationship, SIB: sibling-sibling relationship, GG: senior grandrelative-junior grandrelative relationship, XC: cross cousin-cross cousin relationship, Unknown: relationship unknown or unspecified.

results show that the honorific plural forms are not used among same-sex SIB relationships, same-sex PC relationships, or among GG and XC relationships regardless of sex. This study is based on the data collected from 12 adult Glui speakers⁽⁶⁾ in interviews asking how they address 60 individuals on a list who are members of their own and neighbouring camps (the interviewees themselves are included in the list, too). Tables 3 and 4, reused from Ono (2001) with slight amendments in legend and column headings, show the results: Table 3 shows the distribution of the types of relationships between the interviewees and 59 individuals of the list, and Table 4 shows the numbers of times the grammatically irregular plural forms were used. Follow-up interviews confirmed the results with the speakers' saying that using the plural forms toward a joking partner such as cross cousin and grandrelative does not make sense and should not be used. This is not because they are regarded as disrespectful or offensive, but because they might be confusing. Therefore, this is a dedicated form for avoidance partners, and the term "honorific plural" by Silberbauer correctly manifests its nature.

There are casual ways of addressing, too, using interjections. There are two variants, and they are mainly used according to the sexes of the addresser and addressee between cross cousins. When both parties are female, *?ue bee* [ʔué bēē] is used, and in the other cases *?ae bee* [ʔáé bēē] is used (Table 5).

Table 5. Casual way of addressing between cross cousins

| Sex of addresser | Sex of addressee | Addressing interjection |
|------------------|------------------|-------------------------|
| male | male | <i>?ae bee</i> |
| male | female | <i>?ae bee</i> |
| female | male | <i>?ae bee</i> |
| female | female | <i>?ue bee</i> |

The same forms are used between SIB and PC relationships, as well. In these cases, however, not only the sexes of participants but also their seniority position matters. For SIB relationships, when the participants are a male and a female, then these forms are not used, but the honorific plural is used. Between same sex siblings, elder siblings use this form in addressing, but younger siblings usually do not. Between PC relationships, children use kin terms in addressing their parents. Parents use these forms in addressing their same sex children, whereas they use the names of their children in addressing opposite sex children. That is, for PC and SIB relationships, these casual address forms are used only between same sexes, and from senior side to junior side, but not the other way around. Here, too, the same-sex SIB relationships are similar to PC relationships in the way of using casual address forms.

4. *!AOSENA*: A GIFT-GIVING EXCHANGE ONLY BETWEEN PARTNERS IN A JOKING RELATIONSHIP

Glui practice a special type of delayed gift exchange calld *!aosena(-ku)*, in addition to general gift-giving *chee*, ‘to give,’ which is relevant to the dichotomy.⁽⁷⁾ *!aosena* [*!ãðsènà*] implies the giving of a damaged, but still usable, item. Sugawara (1991) investigated the personal possessions of the Glui people from economic and social perspectives, and he classified the means by which the people obtained their possessions. He was then well aware of *!aosena* being distinguished from general gift giving,⁽⁸⁾ but he treated *!aosena* and general gift giving together as one category under the label of “gift,” and put it in contrast with the other categories of “barter,” “purchase,” “found,” etc. Consequently, he did not separate *!aosena* from general gift giving in the process of analysis.

Typical *!aosena* gifts include inferior handmade tools such as badly-made arrows, imperfect livestock such as a puppy with a malformed leg, or clothes, scarfs, and blankets with holes accidentally burnt by the ash of a cigar or sparks from a fire. The giver is eager for an exclusive partnership, hoping that the recipient will use the gift without throwing it away or giving it to a third party. The giver also expects that in future the recipient will give a newly damaged item which is appropriate as *!aosena* gift to him/her in return, and then their gift giving becomes reciprocal. When the recipient is well acquainted with what a *!aosena* is, then s/he uses *!aosena* gifts as long as possible, until used up or beyond repair.

It might be worth comparing *!aosena* with the famous *hxaro* among Jul’hoansi (a.k.a. !Kung), both of which are acts of delayed gift exchange. What sets them apart are as follows:

First, in *hxaro*, each adult maintains a number of *hxaro* reciprocal partners (16, on average) and consequently forms a wide network connecting even camps or bands (Wiessner, 1982, 2002). Glui people, contrastively, expect to develop a long term, closed, and reciprocal bond with a particular individual with whom they can exchange materials.

Second, *!aosena* gifts must not be given again to a third party, whereas *hxaro* gifts are expected to be passed to subsequent recipients which has the effect of further extending the network. For Glui, a *!aosena* bond should not expand to a wider range, and the reciprocity in *!aosena* is exclusive. These are the reasons that giving a *!aosena* gift serves as an expression of one’s positive personal feelings and an indication of one’s interest to form such a bond.

Third, as I already mentioned, items deemed appropriate as *!aosena* gifts are deformed or damaged, which is a distinct feature of this category of gift-giving.⁽⁹⁾ Contrastively, *hxaro* gifts are something good, new, and beautiful.

What is more, with *hxaro*, the partner’s kin position is irrelevant and even spouses can participate. For *!aosena*, Glui people say that the recipients must be cross cousins (or grandrelatives of the same age group), and parents encourage their young children to start giving *!aosena* gifts to their cross cousins. They say that practicing *!aosena* between spouses is useless, which might be because *!aosena* is expected to function as an extra economical bond outside the house-

hold. One might think, then, that's why it is not given to parents and siblings because they are members of the same household with ego, not because of their kin category. This is not true, because even classificatory parents and siblings who do not share the same household should not be made recipients of *!aosena* gifts.

The following example of *!aosena* describes an episode I unexpectedly experienced with a young Glui girl, which shows how *!aosena* is associated with an intimate joking relationship.

In 1994, on the way to CKGR, I was asked by someone to deliver a big box of old clothes as gifts to the people, and so I handed some of the clothes to my neighbour's family. On the following day, my neighbour's three-year old daughter visited outside of my hut and played alone, talking to me every now and then, and addressing my name. She had never behaved in such a relaxed manner on her own before that day and I wondered what the cause of this sudden change could have been. The reason turned out to be that there had been a pair of toddler's sized socks with holes in them in the clothes I had left with my neighbour and they had reached her. She interpreted this as a *!aosena* gift from me on her parent's advice, and started treating me as her joking partner.

To practice *!aosena* gift-giving, neither opposite-sex or same-sex SIB relationships are inappropriate, as with PC relationships. There is, therefore, a clear contrast between PC/SIB relationships and GG/XC relationships.

5. HOW TO BORROW A THING: WITH OR WITHOUT PERMISSION?

Since Silberbauer (1981) mentions how to deal with the possessions of others, I would like to touch upon this topic, too. He described Glui people using their joking partners' belongings without getting permission from the owners. I have not directly witnessed any such case, since it is not a simple matter to tell whether people act with or without permission of somebody else. Instead, reserved behaviors are observable: Guests sit down in front of the hut of their affine and get what they have in mind without speaking it out loud. Young boys and girls are sent as a shuttle to fetch things between their parents and grandparents who are avoidance affines to each other and avoid direct conversation.

In interviews, when I asked whether it was OK to use other people's possessions without getting their owners' permission, their answers did not form a single consensus. Some answered that it was not OK irrespective of the nature of relationships, while others said it was OK with certain relationships.

There is, however, a repeated idea that cross cousins share their possessions, irrespective of whether they can borrow them without permission or not. In demonstrating expected behavior and accompanying conversation to it, there is a striking contrast: They give a series of minimum, straight, and literal but soft-spoken expressions in borrowing possessions of a parent's or sibling's, such as "Let me borrow such-and-such of yours," "OK, take it," but they never give such a mundane protocol to cross cousins. Between cross cousins, their demonstrations of conversation are always confident and mischievous, full of imperatives and pranks

unrelated to the main purpose. They may start with, for example, "Let me use *my* stuff," and the replies to it may be such banter as follows:

"I'm using it," "Then be quick! Finish it, and let me use it, idiot!"

"Huh? Have you ever given something to me?"

"It is not here, someone has taken it," "Then go fetch it."

The following is a sample demonstration made by my main language consultant, which also shows the idea that cross cousins share their possessions:

"When you are cross cousins with someone, maybe, on the way back home from somewhere, and you are passing through his place finding yourself cold, then enter there (viz. his camp) saying, 'my cross cousin is living here'; he is not there but you just enter his place and take his clothes and put them on and go. It is not stealing. You have taken *your* thing and put it on and gone."

"He may get angry with you?"

"(if he gets angry) Then he is stupid. If he appears, when you are wearing it, those clothes, and you give it to him, and he says, 'who handed it to you?,' and you say, 'Ah, I was cold yesterday and took it and put it on and left,' and then you two quit the topic and he does not get angry with you."

The point here is that they can behave as if their cross cousin's materials were their own belongings. On the other hand, in order to borrow something from a same sex parent or sibling, they say one can enter their camp during the owner's absence and get what they want, but when the owner comes back, they tell the owner that they have borrowed something before being asked. Here again the expected behaviour towards same sex sibling and same sex parents are similar, in contrast to those towards cross cousins.

6. CONCLUDING REMARK

In this paper, I have raised a question on how to deal with the same sex sibling relationship within the Glui avoidance and joking dichotomy, although it has been treated as joking since Silberbauer. I have pointed out that there is no single criterion to tell whether it is avoidance or joking, and proposed a working procedure of comparing the observed and expected behaviour towards same sex siblings with that of other same sex kin, such as parent/child and cross cousins. In order to do that, I have dealt with respectful and casual addressing, a gift giving called *!aosena*, and borrowing one's possessions. All of these have shown that the behavioural code towards same sex siblings is most similar to that of same sex parents, and contrastive to that of same sex cross cousins. Consequently, these two categories should be classified in the same way, with both of them being avoidance or both of them being joking, and if the same-sex PC relationship is regarded as avoidance, as it has been, then the same sex sibling relationship too should be avoidance.

Comparing the expected behaviours also manifested the most salient feature of Glui avoidance and joking: An avoidance relationship can be defined with the existence of restrictions, but a joking relationship can only be negatively defined by having no such restrictions. With avoidance partners, people must behave according to the code attached to the nature of relationship between them, such as age difference, sex difference, and kin position, whereas with joking partners, there is no obligation to behave in a certain way, and people behave according to their own decisions. Each individual can decide with whom s/he will joke and mock combat, and choosing romantic partners and *!aosen*a gift-giving partners is the ultimate case of such self decision based on free will. This means there is a continuum or gradation within the avoidance domain since there are a number of official scales to determine the degree of respectful behaviours, whereas for the joking domain the degree of joking behaviour is decided on a personal basis, and not always equal or reciprocal. The expected behaviour of same sex SIB/PC relationships is milder than that of opposite sex pairs, but in the sense that they do have restrictions on such things as playing *glai-kx'ari*, giving *!aosen*a gift, or on sharing a sexual partner in developing spouse exchanges and serial relationships, and that they need to be aware of the seniority position within the same generation, they should be regarded as avoidance.

This asymmetry between avoidance and joking dichotomy in Glui leads to another question whether the Glui joking category should be regarded as joking or non-avoidance. When the border between behaviours towards same sex avoidance and non-highlighted behaviours towards joking is dissolved and blurred, then the system would only have the extreme avoidance among opposite sex PC/SIB and affines, and rough joking behaviours not based on structural pressure but on personal choice. In such a situation we need to doubt whether the dichotomy is still valid. In the Glui case, the distinction between mild avoidance and joking is still active and working.

NOTES

- (1) An avoidance relationship among same sex siblings is not as well-known as in the case of opposite sexes although it does exist. Atna (a.k.a. Ahtna, an Athabaskan language spoken in Alaska) is an example. According to McClellan (1961), Atna siblings, including of same sex, do not look at each other directly and keep silent “unless it is absolutely necessary” (ibid: 106). Judging from her description, restrictions on behaviour related to avoidance among Atna same sex siblings is stricter than an extreme case of Glui avoidance such as an opposite sex parent-in-law.
- (2) It is interesting that one of Sugawara’s findings denies the description of physical distance by Silberbauer. Sugawara (1990) found that “the in-laws belonging to adjacent generations, i.e., parents and their son’s wife or daughter’s husband, strongly avoid physical contact with each other, though they frequently tend to sit in close proximity (within 0.3 m).” His findings enable us to be aware that being close to and having physical contact with someone are controlled by separate behavioural codes, respectively, and the latter is in greater accordance with the dichotomy than the former is.
- (3) A probable candidate for *gjiukxakxu* is a Naro term *taokx'ai-ku* (tone: HL ML) ‘avoid-

- ance relationship' (Visser, 2001: 80). *tao* in Naro can be *cio* in Glui due to a regular palatalization (Nakagawa, 1998), and *cio* [cið] in Glui means 'to be angry; to be annoyed with each other and keep silent.'
- (4) It is likely that Silberbauer used a palatal click symbol [ʔ] in transcribing an alveolar click [!] in some environments, so *tao* can be *!ao*. The similar terms *!ao*~*!au* are reported to be used for avoidance relationships among Naro *!au* 'avoidance' (Barnard 1976, 1992) and Hailom *!ao* 'to fear' (Widlok, 1999: 184).
 - (5) Widlok (1999: 184) describes avoidance and joking as remaining "largely implicit" among Hailom, too.
 - (6) Young Glui people before puberty do not use this form, since they are irrelevant to the dichotomy.
 - (7) There is also a special type of hunting bond involving an "exchange" of game meat and hunting luck, practiced between a man and his grandrelative, in particular his mother's brother, called *!araxx'ai*. Glui people understand that the head of the game animal is to go to the hunter's uncle, most likely mother's brother, and then this gift will in return benefit the hunter with luck in future hunts. This special bond between a man and his mother's brother is also reflected in an increased degree of physical closeness with intimate contact, as captured by Sugawara (1990), despite the general tendency of males to be more distant with each other than females. After the death of a *!araxx'ai* partner, the game meat will go to his offspring, so this can be a bond not only between two individuals but also between a man and his avunculate line.
 - (8) Sugawara translated *!aosena* as "hand me downs," which is associated with outgrown clothes passed down uni-directionally to younger siblings from one's elder siblings.
 - (9) A similar sort of damaged gift giving was reported to be practiced among Korana (patrilineal herders). In an extreme case, mother's brother and sister's son, practised an asymmetric playful exchange (Engelbrecht, 1936) wherein the mother's brother would take "anything that had a defect" and in return the sister's son would take "anything that was whole." Listed along with this account were examples of "anything that had a defect," such as skins of his that had had holes burnt into them, deformed stock, e.g., cattle which had lost one or both horns, chipped or broken domestic articles, and a useless gun (ibid: 155). The idea of the "faulty or deformed" is exactly the same as the description of what should be given in *!aosena* gift-giving among the Glui.

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